COMIC SHOP NEWS

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NEW WARRIORS

New Warriors ™ & © 1992 Marvel Comics, ABR.

You Need Unity

Starting in May, Valiant Comics will be attempting to bring together all of their titles through their most courageous undertaking to date--a major cross-over storyline called ***Unity***.

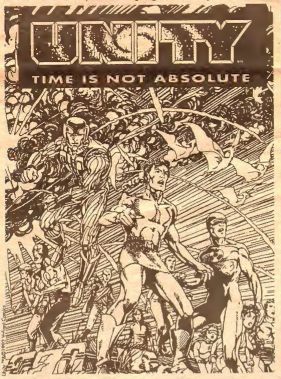
"We're very excited about this." Valiant representative Jon Hartz said. "Unity will finally make everybody realize how the entire Valiant universe fits together." Valiant Comics currently publishes six ongoing titles, but plans to release two more in May to coincide with the release of Unity.

The first, ***Archer and Armstrong***, is the story of an super-strong street bum and an eastern martial artist who has recently come back from the dead. "This is the first ongoing title that Barry Smith is going to be working on as a regular artist for us, and it looks positively fabulous." Hartz said. ***Archer and Armstrong*** will be written by Valiant head-man and ***Magnus: Robot Fighter*** scripter Jim Shooter.

The second title is called the ***Eternal Warrior***, the story of an immortal who is constantly getting involved in the conflicts of man. "He isn't drawn to them or anything," Hartz said, "he just happens to be there when he's needed." The story and art team for the ***Eternal Warrior*** consists or Jim Shooter, Janet Jackson, and John Dixon.

Unity tells the story that was begun in the pages of ***Solar: Man of the Atom***, and the special origin story that has been building up through the first eight issues. Issue #10 of ***Solar*** sees the destruction of Solar's world and his travel into our world, but someone else survives the destruction and travels into another world--to another Earth. "Actually, it's called the Lost Land." Hartz explained. "It's the land where Turok, Son of Stone lives." It is also here that this other being sets out to re-write the history of all the universes and all of creation.

Unity will feature cross-overs into all of Valiant's titles; all of these crossovers will be instantly identifiable by their eye-catching Frank Miller covers. Describing the covers that Miller had done for Valiant, Jon Hartz said, "They are brilliant. Very eye-catching pieces of work. I think that people will be surprised how good a job Miller has done--and from somebody as talented as he is, that's saying something!"



Before the first cross-over issue ships however, Valiant will be releasing the special ***Unity #0*** 16-page comic completely drawn by Barry Windsor-Smith. In addition to the Windsor-Smith art, there is one other thing that is special about this issue: it's free. Jon Hartz explains, "We want as many people as possible to see how good this story is, so to get them started, every comic shop will be sent two copies of ***Unity #0*** for every set of each titles that they order from Valiant for that month. Then, after the story is over, we will release ***Unity #1*** as an epilogue to the whole story."

Unity is more than just a major crossover; it contains enough action and major events to last for three or four series--for example: the birth of Kris' (from ***Harbinger***) child and the revelation to the father's identity, the destruction of an entire country, the origin of Magnus: Robot Fighter, and the death of one of Valiant's major heroes! This cross-over series promises to be one of the biggest events of the year, so don't miss out on a chance to see the development a major new fictional universe. ***Unity*** begins in May and runs through the end of June.

by Brett Brooks

New Warriors, New Problems, New Artist

Fans who just assumed that the ***New Warriors*** would continue along with business as usual are going to be in for a variety of surprises in the next few months. Writer Fabian Nicieza has several things planned, including the arrest and sentencing of one member of the team, the departure of another, the relocation of a third, and the addition of not one but two new members--although only one of them has any super-powers at all. (For more information, see this issue's ***CSN*** *Spotlight on Fabian Nicieza* beginning on page 4.)

There *is* bad news in store for ***New Warriors***, though: artist Mark Bagley, who has been with the title since its inception, will be leaving the book after ***New Warriors #25***. "***New Warriors*** has been the most enjoyable experience in comics that I've had," Bagley said, "but I need to concentrate on one thing and ***Amazing Spider-Man*** is that thing right now. ***New Warriors*** has been a great experience, but it's time to move on. I'm going to miss working with Fabian Nicieza in particular."

Chris Marrinan will fill in for ***New Warriors #24*** so that Bagley can prepare his double-sized final issue of ***New Warriors***. ***New Warriors #25***, a May release, will feature a die-cut cover and will be priced at $2.50. (No permanent artist has been announced to replace Bagley after his departure, although Darick Robertson will be illustrating several issues.)

by Cliff Biggers

The Mower, The Merrier

The Lawnmower Man, an offbeat Stephen King story, was adapted by Walt Simonson into a comic book story in Marvel's black-and-white magazine ***Bizarre Adventures*** many years ago; readers with long memories who recall that original story will find that it has very little in common with Innovation Comics' upcoming graphic novel adaptation of the film ***Stephen King's Lawnmower Man***, however.

The original story was the tale of an enigmatic lawn-mower who--shall we say--seems to have a real taste for his work. The new film is a high-tech story of virtual reality experiments and cyber-reality.

So how did the Stephen King story become the film? Through a bizarre turn of events that could only happen in Hollywood, that's how. The original script idea for the film ***Lawnmower Man***, written by Brett Leonard and Gimel Everett, existed before the current title or the Stephen King story was ever associated with it. Since King's name gives a film an appeal that's hard for many horror fans to resist, though, Gimel and Everett reworked the original script to include some references to the King short story as a minor segment of the larger tale, and the result is this new film that Diana Light, the author of the comic book adaptation, describes as "...like Lennie from John Steinbeck's ***Of Mice and Men*** meeting cyberpunk..." (Of course, this sort of "creative rebuilding" isn't at all unusual for Hollywood; after all, the James Bond films often had nothing in common with the books of the same title, and ***Total Recall*** and ***Bladerunner***, both inspired by Philip K. Dick works, drifted far astray from the source material in their film adaptations.)

Editor Dave Campiti is aware of the changes that have been made, but he is still quite excited with the opportunity to bring a King-related project to comics. "This is the first time a major comic-book publisher has had this sort of opportunity regarding a Stephen King-based project," Campiti said. "Although New American Library put out a Berni Wrightson adaptation based on the ***Creepshow*** film several years ago, no regular comics company has ever had a Stephen King novel or movie on their schedule."

The story involves a simple-minded gardener named Jobe Smith, who becomes part of an experiment by a scientist from The Shop (a recurrent background "villain" in various Stephen King works, including ***Firestarter*** and ***Golden Years***) to boost his intelligence. When The Shop finds out about the experimentation, they covertly begin to change its direction to something more suitable to their own malevolent purposes.

"It's more science fiction than you might expect," Diana Light said, "and less horror--although it's quite intense and visceral, which you'd expect from a work based on King."

The Lawnmower Man is a group effort, insofar as the art is concerned. "For the cover painting, we selected Dave Dorman," art director George Broderick Jr. said, "who has painted covers for the ***Aliens*** books and a host of other projects... For the 'normal' sequences, which fill perhaps 60 pages of the graphic novel, we selected Stuart Immonen, Rick Magyar, and Chris Ballard as our art team... To get the in-computer Virtual Reality look we needed, we decided to forego actual computer work. So we approached Shea Anton Pensa... He loves painting and cyberpunk-oriented material, and we've been talking about bringing him aboard ever since we started adding Anne Rice books to our schedule--so ***The Lawnmower Man*** seemed tailor-made to suit his talents."

Innovation stresses the relative uniqueness of its ***Lawnmower Man*** graphic novel adaptation. "This is the only place readers can buy this story!" David Campiti said. "There is no Stephen King ***Lawnmower Man*** novel, only the original story which plays but a bit part in the film concept. This is also no 'official novelization' hitting the bookstores. This is the real thing: the only book version of ***Stephen King's The Lawnmower Man*** movie you're going to find."

The Lawnmower Man, an 84-page fully painted graphic novel priced at $6.95, is scheduled for early April release, to coincide with the release of the New Line Cinema film.

by Cliff Biggers

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QUICKSHOTS

Freaks Show

Few horror movies from the 1930's have achieved the level of notoriety of **Freaks,** *Tod Browning's* 1932 shocker. The film, which utilized in its cast many actual "freaks" from circus shows, shocked and appalled viewers who were unprepared for its brutal, sometimes horrifying, visuals. According to Monster Comics, "When Tod Browning's **Freaks** premiered in San Diego in 1932, it shocked audiences and sent people literally screaming from the theater! **Freaks** was banned for nearly thirty years in England, and MGM actually disowned the film and withdrew it from circulation. It reappeared over the years, heavily edited and under different titles, and continued to build its notorious reputation as one of the most nightmarish movies ever made..."

This year, **Freaks** brings its morbid reality to the comics medium in a four-issue limited series written by *Jim Woodring* and illustrated by *F. Solano Lopez.* This series includes material cut from the film after its initial showings; it also fleshes out some of the film's more minor characters and adds new character as well, all in keeping with the sinister tone of Browning's original work. *Sam Kieth,* whose covers for **Marvel Comics Presents** have been captivating fans recently, supplies the covers for all four issues of this adaptation; **Freaks #1,** a $2.50 comic suggested for mature readers, is scheduled for late April release.

Watching the Detectives...

Chuck Dixon and *Tom Lyle* made **Robin** a hit not once but twice; both Dixon-Lyle miniseries were top sellers upon release, and both drew extremely enthusiastic fan response. Well, it fans liked Dixon and Lyle's Robin, they're going to love Dixon and Lyle's Batman--because beginning with **Detective #644,** an early April release, Chuck Dixon will be the new regular writer for the book, and he will be joined by artist Tom Lyle for a three-issue story arc entitled "Electric City. Scott Hanna will be the inker for all three issues, which pit Batman and Robin against a vengeance-seeking criminal who hopes to use his new-found electrical powers to kill those involved in his execution--but before Batman can battle Buzz Galvan, he'll also have to overcome the Electrocutioner, who is after Galvan in his own shocking way...

It's In the Cards

Wizard #10, an April release, will feature a must have inclusion for all *Rob Liefeld* fans: a **Youngblood #0** trading card, produced exclusively for this comics magazine. Garb Shamus of Wizard adds that each copy of Wizard will be polybagged to protect the card in transit. Liefeld is also supplying a new cover illustration featuring Cable and Shaft. ***Wizard #10*** is priced at $2.95.

Boy Oh Boy!

Superboy, the comic book series inspired by the successful syndicated tv series, is coming to an end--but what a way to wrap things up! **Superboy Special #1,** a $1.75 48-page finale, features a team that older comics fans will thrill to! long-time **Superman** penciller *Curt Swan* unites with inker par excellence *Joe Sinnott,* whose inks added so much to Jack Kirby's **Fantastic Four.** In this issue written by *Stan Berkowitz,* Superboy must decide whether or not to reveal his secret identity to Lana Lang. **Superboy Special #1** is slated for May 7th release--and all of us long-time Swan fans will be counting the days!...

Suicide--the End

The Suicide Squad has faced a lot of dangerous adversaries, but the events of **Suicide Squad #66** are so devastating that it'll mark the end of the series. DC is keeping mum about just what'll happen, but they offer the teaser statement that "Amanda Waller and the rest of the Squad face a villain who may be as powerful and cold-hearted as death itself. Neither Amanda nor the Squad will ever be the same..." Right now, only *Yalo, Ostrander, Isherwood,* and *Campanella* know--and they aren't telling!... **Suicide Squad #66,** a $1.25 comic, is slated for May 7th release.

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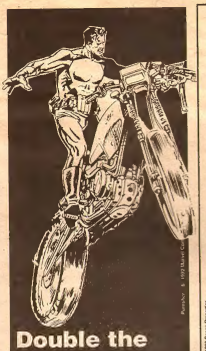
The Dream Team

Aquaman versus Aquaman? One of Aquaman's deepest fears, it seems, is facing the complexities of his own role as hero, regent, outcast, and survivor. When Aquaman is hospitalized and near death in the pages of **Aquaman #7,** though, he must face all of his deepest fears, including a twisted version of himself as well as dream versions of J'onn J'onzz, Black Canary, Green Lantern, and Flash. If Aquaman loses in the dream world, will he lose his battle for life itself?... We'll find out on April 23rd, when *McLaughlin, Hooper,* and *Dvorak* present **Aquaman #7,** a $1.25 comic.



Double the Punishment

Can it be time for Marvel to kick off its biweekly run already? Well, not quite, but almost--because the first bi-weekly title, **Punisher,** begins its biweekly tenure on April 23rd. The seven-issue storyline debuting in that issue is "Eurohell," an international tale written by Marvel UK stars *Dan Abnett* and *Andy Lanning* and illustrated by *Dougie Braithwaite* and *Al Williamson*. Braithwaite, who has also done a great deal of work for Marvel UK, is the new regular penciller for **Punisher,** so be sure to check out his work. **Punisher #64** is the book to look out for, so don't miss out!

Time For a New Conan Graphic Novel...

Conan and the Ravagers of Time, the latest Conan graphic novel, isn't *just* a Conan project; it also features Red Sonja and King Kull, united to do battle with Rotath the sorcerer, who has a scheme to transfer his mind to the body of King Kull. Rotath has reasons to dislike Kull, mind you; it was Kull, after all, who defeated him initially and imprisoned Rotath's mind in the body of a giant slug (guess you could call that one a real slug-fest, eh?). Through various mystical means, Conan, Red Sonja, and Kull are joined together to prevent Rotath from implementing his plans--and there you have the conflict for this latest 64-page Conan graphic novel!

Conan and the Ravagers of Time is written by current Conan author Roy Thomas, who is joined by the art team of Mike Docherity and Alfredo Alcala. Look for this $9.95 graphic novel on April 9th.

Star Trek Heads For Deep Space

Since there have been rumors galore that **Star Trek: The Next Generation** might follow the path of the original Star Trek series and move from television to films soon, a lot of Trek fans have wondered how th-ey'd be able to get their weekly television dose of **Star Trek** adventures. Paramount Television has the solution: **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine,** a new series going into production this summer for twenty episodes. **Deep Space Nine** is set on a frontier space station that's always breaking down, according to Paramount executives. No one has been cast for the series yet, but there will be some crossover storylines and characters from **Star Trek: The Next Generation,** since **Deep Space Nine** is set in the Next Generation universe. *Rick Berman* and *Michael Pillar*, executive producers of **TNG,** are also execs and creators on this project. Look for it to debut in late '92 or early '93–and while no deals have been closed yet, we can keep our fingers crossed that we'll see a comic book version of the series soon after...

Statue Commemorates the Right to Prey

Dark Horse is ready to add a third cold-cast porcelain figure to its steadily-growing line of *Randy Bowen*-designed statuary; this time, Bowen has sculpted a detailed **Predator** figure, demonstrating what a skull-ful hunter he is as he stands over a pile of his "trophies." The figure, which stands about 9" tall, is shipped unassembled and unpainted in eight pieces; each statue is shipped with an engraved and numbered brass plaque. Acclaimed artist *John Bolton* supplies the cover painting for the box; both the painting and the figure can be yours for only $150. Dark Horse is manufacturing only a thousand of the figures, so you should certainly let your local comic shop know if you're interested.

Being For the Benefit of Mr. Waller

Omaha the Cat Dancer is one of the most critically acclaimed adult comic titles on the market today, enjoyed by both fans and professionals. So when the news got out that *Reed Waller*, one of the book's creators, was hospitalized for intensive treatment of colon cancer, co-creator *Kate Worley* organized some of the book's many fans and organized a benefit book to assist Waller with his extensive hospitalization expenses. *Dan Clowes, Howard Cruse, Will Eisner, Harlan Ellison, Phil Foglio, Neil Gaiman, Denis Kitchen, Terry Laban, Rich Larsen, Steve Fastner, Larry Marder, Alan Moore, Trina Robbins, Steve Rude, Stan Sakai, Mark Schultz, Al Williamson,* and others have contributed to the book, which is tentatively slated as a 32-page $3.95 book (but it may run longer). The book is intended for adults only–and will probably be a must-have for anyone who has ever enjoyed an issue of **Omaha the Cat Dancer.**

The Uncanny X-Ghost?

Ghost Rider has met Cable, the Punisher, and Wolverine– so Marvel has decided it's time for Ghost Rider to cross the X-Men's path. The landmark meeting kicks off in **Ghost Rider #26**, in this issue. Ghost Rider heads to New Orleans during Mardis Gras to see if Blaze can rescue Dan, and he teams up with the X-Men on the way. At the same time, readers will learn something about Gambit's past. The storyline will cross over with **X-Men #9**, scheduled for release a week later. *Howard Mackie, Ron Wagner,* and *Mike Witherby* handle the creative honors for **Ghost Rider #16,** an April 16th release; *John Byrne, Jim Lee,* and *Scott Williams* handle the honors for **X-Men #9**, scheduled to hit the stands on April 23rd.

Omaha™ & ©1992 Reed Waller

Youngblood: A Glowing Success

Youngblood, the new *Rob Liefeld* title from Malibu Graphics' Image Comics, is being delayed until late February or early March to make sure that all three issues will be released on a regular bi-monthly schedule–but don't expect the few weeks' delay to dampen fans' enthusiasm for the book. As **CSN** told you two weeks ago, **Youngblood** is already the best-selling creator-owned comic of all time–and because of that, Liefeld is making sure that the book is the best it can be. "Rob is taking his responsibility to the fans very seriously with this book," publisher *Dave Olbrich* said. "He's working very hard to make this his best work. It's Rob's way of repaying the fans who have shown so much excitement about this project."

Hank Kanalz is co-writing Youngblood with Rob Liefeld. "Hank and I originally planned to do **Youngblood** for Malibu back in 1987. We had even signed contracts. Then everyone got sidetracked doing other things and the deal fell apart. A lot of things have changed since '87, both for Malibu and for myself. It's fun to get back together after all this time and take advantage of our growth and experience, and do something really *big* for the fans, for independent comics and for the direct market."

Olbrich also announced that the third issue of **Youngblood** would offer a special glow-in-the-dark cover designed and illustrated by Liefeld. Look for it to hit the stands in May.

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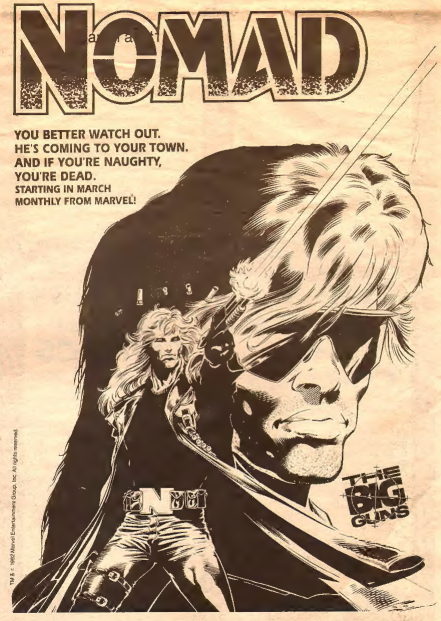

CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics speciality shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. Punisher: War Zone 1
2. X-Men 6
3. X-Force 8
4. Uncanny X-Men 286
5. Spider-Man 20
6. Batman:Gotham Nights 1
7. X-Factor 76
8. Wolverine 52
9. Warlock & the Infinity Watch 2
10. Batman Vs. Predator 3 (prestige)
11. Ghost Rider 23
12. Deathlok 9
13. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 28
14. Punisher 61
15. Incredible Hulk 391
16. Next Men 1
17. Silver Surfer 63
18. Amazing Spider-Man 360
19. Darkhawk 13
20. Batman 475
21. Predator: Bloody Sands of Time 1
22. New Warriors 21
23. Namor 24
24. Aliens: Genocide 4
25. Punisher War Journal 40
26. Batman Vs. Predator 3 (newsstand)
27. Captain America 398
28. Excalibur 48
29. Avengers 345
30. Thor 445
31. Marvel Comics Presents 97
32. Marvel Comics Presents 98
33. Death's Head II 1
34. Justice League America 60
35. Fantastic Four 362
36. Avengers West coast 80
37. Guardians of the Galaxy 22
38. Detective 642
39. Iron Man 278
40. Terminator: Enemy Within 3
41. Deathstroke the Terminator 8
42. Daredevil 302
43. Wonder Man 7
44. Quasar 32
45. Superman 65
46. Superman: Man of Steel 9
47. Spectacular Spider-Man 186
48. Web of Spider-Man 86
49. Action 675
50. Sleepwalker 10

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late January and February sales period.

1. Punisher: War Zone 1
2. Batman Vs. Predator 3 (prestige)
3. X-Men 6
4. X-Force 8
5. Spider-Man 20
6. Uncanny X-Men 286
7. Wolverine 52
8. Warlock & the Infinity Watch 2
9. Ghost Rider 23
10. Batman: Gotham Nights 1
11. X-Factor 76
12. Next Men 1
13. Deathlok 9
14. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 28
15. Predator: Bloody Sands of Time 1
16. Skull & Bones 1
17. Aliens: Genocide 4
18. Batman Vs. Predator 3 (newsstand)
19. Punisher War Journal 40
20. Punisher 61
21. Terminator: Enemy Within 3
22. Shado: Song of the Dragon 1
23. Incredible Hulk 391
24. Excalibur 48
25. Death's Head II 1
26. Marvel Comics Presents 97
27. Marvel Comics Presents 98
28. Silver Surfer 63
29. Amazing Spider-Man 360
30. Marvel Milestone: Amazing Fantasy 15
31. Deathstroke the Terminator 8
32. Justice League International Quarterly 6
33. Darkhawk 13
34. My Name is Chaos 1
35. New Warriors 21
36. Namor 24
37. Captain America 398
38. Avengers 345
39. Thor 445
40. Fantastic Four 362
41. Avengers West Coast 80
42. Guardians of the Galaxy 22
43. Iron Man 278
44. Daredevil 302
45. Wonder Man 7
46. Lost In Space 4
47. Quasar 32
48. Miracleman: Apocrypha 1
49. New Titans 84
50. Batman 475

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Dark Horse Presents 58
2. Savage Sword of Conan 194
3. Cerebus 154
4. Evil Ernie 2
5. Faust Act One: Rebel Edition
6. Vampirella 3
7. Usagi Yojimbo 32
8. Venus Wars 10
9. Conan Saga 60
10. Robotech Sentinels II 11

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TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the January sales period.

1. Aliens Vs. Predator TPB
2. Fantastic Four Bookshelf Edition
3. Swamp Thing: Dark Genesis TPB
4. Frank Frazetta Cards
5. Marvel Universe Deluxe Handbook 16
6. Silver Surfer: Homecoming GN
7. DC Who's Who 16
8. Wizard 6
9. Comics Values Monthly 63
10. Warlord TPB

Fabian Nicieza

by Cliff Biggers

Fabian Nicieza is well-known to fans because of his high-profile work on such books as New Warriors, Adventures of Captain America, Alpha Flight (from 87 through 100), and (as scripter) X-Force. Beginning next month, he adds a new title to his list of credits: Nomad, the latest entry in Marvel's "Big Guns" series of titles. Nicieza wrote the original Nomad limited series that proved so popular two years ago; now he's ready to prove that a Nomad is just as solid a concept now as he was in 1990.

How did Nomad graduate to his own ongoing series?

The ***Nomad*** series came about because the miniseries was so successful and the character was so interesting that the Marvel decision-makers felt he could carry a monthly book!...

Also, we're trying to develop a "family" of characters that are, ostensibly tough-guy urban types. Nomad belongs to that group superficially, but there are some significant differences. For one thing, he doesn't really shoot his gun. He has a baby on his back. He's a father. He's a failed superhero in many ways. After the events of the limited series, he's consciously trying not to be a tough-guy urban type.

The kinds of situations he gets himself involved in are very different from the Punisher situations or the Cage situations. He gets himself involved in very small stories about regular people, for the most part. A moment getting blackmailed in Seattle, for example, or a group of imbeciles in a small town who are running over animals to maintain their reputation as the road kill capital of the United States.... Not until ***Nomad #3*** does something come to him--which is the US Agent and the United States government, who have been pursuing him since the events that took place in Alaska in the limited series, where he basically slaughtered almost two dozen US and Russian soldiers--but even that is going to be different in a way, because they want to work a deal out whereby they'll leave him alone if he does what they want him to do. They want to keep their hands clean, so they're going to offer him the opportunity.

Nomad, much more so than any of the others, is manipulated by events and by people that he has no control over. It's tough to describe him without making him sound weak, and he's not weak of character; he has a real strength of character, but a real lack of direction, a lack of focus. That's why he's a wanderer; he just wanders around. This give me an opportunity to tell different kinds of stories within the Marvel Universe banner in a different way.

Even when he gets involved in more main-line action, it doesn't follow the norm. For example, there's going to be an ***Infinity Wars*** crossover--which is the last thing in the world I'd want for Nomad normally--but it's completely by accident, completely arbitrary. Something comes to where he is and he feels obligated to get involved. It's sort of like a "***Die Hard*** Meets ***Terminator II***" story. Not once will you ever hear the name of the character who's the doppelganger of the villain; he won't know who he's fighting. All he knows is that there are people being killed in an airport and he feels obligated to do something about it because that's the kind of person he is. It never works out as well as he would like, though, because his ideal is Captain America--and that's a stupid ideal to have in a way, because you're always going to end up failing if you compare yourself to Captain America.

Nomad 1

Nomad doesn't have a "home town." Is there any pattern used in selecting the cities to which he wanders?

Yes, absolutely. It's all by accident.

No, it's really because of the direction he happened to be going in at the very end of the limited series. He ended up in Alaska, so he's been wandering downward ever since. He starts off in Seattle, he wanders through Northern California and into Los Angeles, he'll be involved in the crossover that goes on in Las Vegas, he goes back to Los Angeles again for a couple of issues, events there force him to leave again, so he

CSN SPOTLIGHT

X-Force

Oh yeah, absolutely--but it was all by accident, not by design! It's a goofy story in a way. I was working on the plot to issue three of the limited series and I realized that he couldn't return the baby to the mother; she's a crack addict, a prostitute, a blackmailer, and a manipulator. He's not going to leave the baby with this person! But he's also not going to leave the baby in a foster home, because that's how he grew up, and that's the last thing he wants for someone else. In his natural thought progression, he would be the next logical person to raise the kid. It has almost happened by accident.

He took the baby with him because he can't perceive it being with anyone else. It's also good for him in a way, because it's teaching him to be a responsible adult. For a man who wanders from town to town, making money any way he can, getting involved in firefights, he's as responsible as you're gonna get.

I told Howard Mackie, the editor, that I can't have him leave the baby with that sort of mother. Howard said, "That's right, you can't." He isn't a good parent--so I decided to develop that. And then James Fry, the artist, drew a mask on the baby and said, "Let's call her Bucky." I said, "James, you are sick, man--let's do it!" Then he put a domino mask on her--which she's not going to wear all the time, of course. Nomad is the most natural one in the world to pass the name of Bucky on to the next sidekick--and I think she is the ultimate sidekick.

She's not useful in the way that Cub is in ***Lone Wolf and Cub***. She can't do things like he does; the most she does is drool a little and teethe, neither of which is very effective in a firefight. She is a scavenger, though; I'm trying to show that little by little. If he hands her something, she'll stick it in her little pouch area and hang on to it; it's a good thing, too, because people are less likely to say "search the baby."

You mentioned that Nomad didn't use his guns much; do you see him as having a basic difference in motivation from a character like the Punisher?

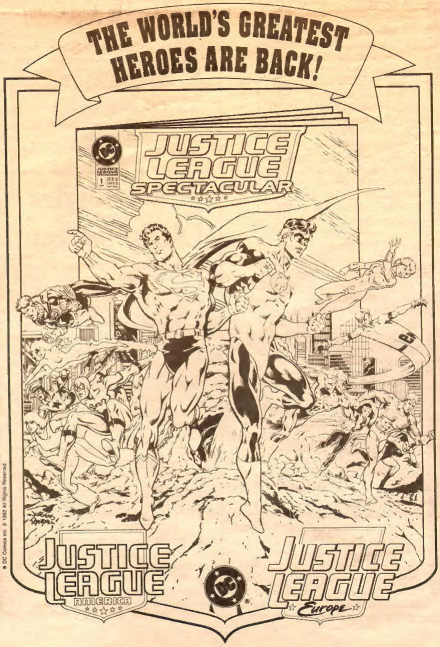
Well, the Punisher, to my mind, always acts out of guilt for the death of his family. He doesn't even act out of vengeance or justice, but out of that guilt--that's my take on the character. Nomad has a really different reason for what he does--but he doesn't know why he does the things he does. My approach is that he's doing it because he has so many questions about what's wrong that he's desperately trying to do what's right. He's so uncertain about himself, about this country, that he'll do whatever he has to at that time to make a little bit of sense out of the situation. If someone is being blackmailed, he'll do what he can to fix that. He deals with morality one problem at a time, and he works to eliminate that problem. If there are people who are killing animals, he'll do something to make sure that they'll never kill animals again. It doesn't necessarily mean killing them; it just means making sure that they won't do it again. Sometimes his methods are very blunt and very straightforward; other times they are very ingenious.

New Warriors

Will Nomad meet any other Marvel heroes?

Oh, yeah. Before the ***Infinity Wars*** crossover, we have a really good crossover with ***Punisher War Journal*** and ***Daredevil***. It's called "Dead Man's Hands," and it runs in June, July, and August of this year. It's a nine part story that's actually a three-part story with two months of individual stories in the same location going on. Only the last three issues cross over directly into each other, one after the other; the previous issues in the storyline feature each of the characters getting involved in and making headway through what is basically a gangland business meeting. The void left by the Kingpin is going to be filled by all the different crimelords of the Marvel Universe, who are trying to divide up his former territory in a very businesslike, professional fashion. Meanwhile, in the background, that's where the people are stabbing each other in the back and killing each other--and that's where these characters come in.

Nomad, Daredevil, and Punisher all go, for very different reasons, to Las Vegas, where this meeting is taking place. They only come across each other sporadically; Daredevil and Nomad have never met, but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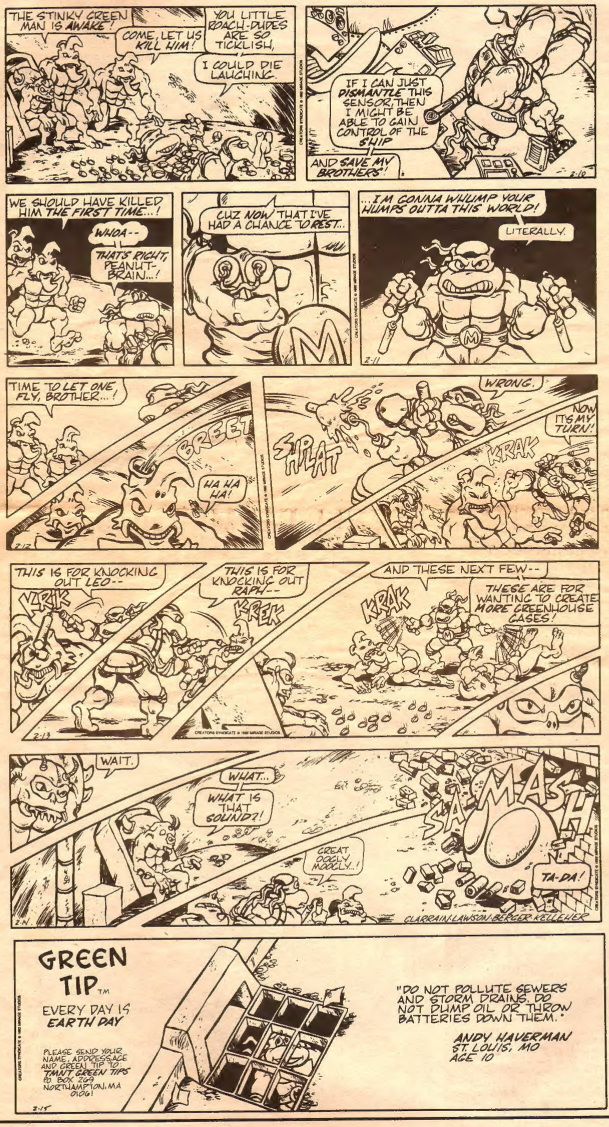
THE STINKY GREEN MAN IS AWAKE!
YOU LITTLE ROACH-DUDES ARE SO TICKLISH,
COME, LET US KILL HIM!
I COULD DIE LAUGHING
IF I CAN JUST DISMANTLE THIS SENSOR, THEN I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE SHIP
AND SAVE MY BROTHERS!
WE SHOULD HAVE KILLED HIM THE FIRST TIME...!
WHOA--
THAT'S RIGHT, PEANUT-BRAIN...!
EUZ NOW THAT I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO REST..
...I'M GONNA WHUMP YOUR WHIMPS OUTTA THIS WORLD!
LITERALLY.
TIME TO LET ONE FLY, BROTHER...!
BRRRT
HA HA HA!
WRONG.
NOW IT'S MY TURN!
SPLAT
KRAK
THIS IS FOR KNOCKING OUT LEO--
KRAK
THIS IS FOR KNOCKING OUT RAPH--
KREEK
AND THESE NEXT FEW--
KRAK
THESE ARE FOR WANTING TO CREATE MORE GREENHOUSE GASES!
WAIT.
WHAT..
WHAT IS THAT SOUND?!
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SMASH
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ST. LOUIS, MO
AGE 10

they're on close enough to the same wavelengths that they never get in each other's way. Punisher and Daredevil do not like each other; Dan Chichester is developing that even more. As for Punisher and Nomad--well, Nomad would tolerate Punisher's methods, and Punisher would likely say, "Put some bullets in the gun; you might be better off."

None of the characters really team up, and none of them really fight; we're trying to do what we called a Looney Tunes thing. That's what we called it when we were having our meetings. On one street, these two guys are fighting; you round the corner of the street and another two guys are fighting, and then they cross by each other, and you switch sides--it's like Bugs Bunny running in and out of doors with people chasing him.

I have a Nomad meets Red Wolf story in the works, as usual, because I think that's part of my job description here--I have to do a Red Wolf story every once in a while. That'll be in the first year, also.

One thing that's making it a little tough for me to schedule things precisely is the artist, Clarke Hawbaker. He's fantastic, but he's not able to do twelve issues a year right now; we're hoping to get eight to ten issues a year out of him. The others are already preplanned, in place--they're not even fill-ins, because they are what they would have been all along, whether Clarke had drawn them or not. I'm just plotting them first because other artists are drawing them; I don't know exactly when they'll fall into place, though at least one of those is being worked on already.

Clarke has done almost nothing before this--I think he's done one ***Marvel Comics Presents*** story and some back-up thing, but that's it for Marvel. He may have worked for an independent company a while back, but I'm not sure; for Marvel, though, he's done just two short stories, and then he got this regular assignment--not based on his speed, which isn't that swift right now, but on his quality, which just oozes all over the page.

The inker is Mark McKenna and the colorist is Joe Rosas, both from the limited series. The combination is very illustrative, very strong, and it works well with the style of the stories. When I saw the first pencil samples that Clarke did of the character, I thought, "This is the first time that anyone has drawn Nomad the way I've seen him for four years." It's the first time that anyone just nailed him from the hair on his head to the boots on his feet; I love that about Clarke's style. I think it looks very different than ***Punisher*** or ***Deathstroke*** or any other books in this genre from Marvel or DC.

We have one other issue being worked on by a new guy, Rick Mayes, whose stuff is also very impressive. He's working on a fun story that takes place in Albuquerque; it's a cross-dressing issue. The cross-dress-

CSN Turtles Strip Survey

We've heard from a number of readers who have asked that we devote the space currently occupied by the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* newspaper strip to news and art. Many fans indicated that they are already getting the strip in their local paper and reprint magazines. Being the democratic type, we want to get your opinion:

Do you read the strip regularly? _____

Do you see it elsewhere? _____

Would you rather we devote the space to more news and art? _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

You can send your reply to our editorial address which is on page 2.

FABIAN NICIEZA

ing society in Albuquerque, which meets once a month, has had its people being killed, and they ask Nomad to stop it. Actually, he walks into a bar for a beer and he finds two dozen unshaven cigar-smoking men in dresses, and he gets very curious--and of course, that's going to necessitate Nomad wearing a dress as well.

That's the approach of this book: here's this guy, Nomad, who knows nothing from nothing about this kind of a life, and he finds out about it without prejudice. He's such an open guy--there's a reason that we made his glasses mirror lenses, you know. I wanted him to reflect everything in the world; he's learning about it, and he isn't bothered by it. By the end of the issue, he's thinking, "All right, fine. They put on dresses. Cool. As long as they don't hurt anyone, then have a good time." It's so fun to be able to show this guy's reactions as they occur. He tries so hard to be cool; being cool is everything to him. He can be involved in just about anything and he'll try to play around it.

I'm not doing big stories about Nomad fighting Red Skull. I hope there's an audience for this; I want to write for an audience who is less interested in books that don't explode in your face; I want to give stories that don't answer everything. There are no neat solutions here; the people who do wrong in the book, unless they're killed--and that rarely happens--may be back doing the same thing tomorrow. Nomad just hopes he can get through to them. And he's learning, too; he's always learning things that he didn't know about.

I have the first two years mapped out; it's going to end in Washington DC, where he has to kill someone who happens to work there. As a result of this, he learns a lot about his past, about who his parents were, where they are--he doesn't know this because he lived in foster homes all his life. It turns out they're alive and they live in America, but he can't see them because he has to leave the country really fast; after that, Nomad will be spending some time in Paris--eventually...

And hey, I know that fans who don't like that style will enjoy ***Nomad #4,*** because Deadpool beats the crap out of Nomad, so it can't be all bad...

You're continuing on New Warriors, but I understand there are some changes coming up in both creative team and storyline.

Yeah, Mark Bagley is leaving--bye Mark, I'm really going to miss you, and I mean that!--so we'll be getting a new artist. Chris Marrinan is doing an issue, and then Daerick Robertson has agreed to pencil several issues, but I don't know what'll be happening after that.

After the current storylines wrap up, Vance has to make a decision if he wants to remain in jail or not--in the Vault, actually--and Thrasher leaves the book to go into his limited series. Namorita and Silhouette are basically leading the team; as a result of what happens in the backup story in ***New Warriors Annual #2,*** though, Namorita is going to be a little more aggressive in the approach she takes on the team's missions. The Force of Nature will be back, as will Project Earth; they're trying to make friends with the warriors, who like the aims of the group but disagrees with Project Earth's means.

Rage is staying with the team, with a new costume. Namorita insists on that because she just can't abide what Rage is wearing now. A new character will be introduced, Turbo, who is a she--for now. Eventually, you'll see what that means.

Speedball's parents are getting divorced, so he moves into Manhattan. Someone's going to find out his secret identity and blackmail him into letting them join the team--but this guy has no powers. Actually, he does have one power: he's very good at telling people what they should have done after the fact. His name is going to be Hindsight Lad; in this two or three issue story, we're going to show why non-powered people should never be involved in this sort of superhero action. He forces his way into the team, which he really shouldn't have done--because if the villains don't kill him, the Warriors might!...

Nomad 2

Erik Larsen seems to be talking more and more seriously about a Nova limited series; will you be connected with this at all?

Well, Erik has sent me everything he's been working on so far; since Danny Fingeroth, the ***New Warriors*** editor, would be editing that miniseries as well, there's a great deal of coordination. The biggest problem involves continuity; tying it in to whatever is going on the Warriors at that time is the tough part.

Erik wants to do a lot of really cool things for a lot of people, and I know he'll do them, but right now he has to juggle everything at once. I can't wait to see his series--but I also can't put everything on hold until it happens. ***New Warriors*** is the parent book of Nova, so he'll have to make the pieces fit when he gets around to Nova. Erik's a really talented guy, and I wish he'd stop doing all these other cool projects so he could do Nova, because I want to see it!

You're also doing the X-Annuals this year; how was it, writing all those teams?

Thing have gone just great. It's called "Shattershot," it's four issues long, and I'm almost done! There are some great artists working on the ***X-Men Annual,*** including Jim Lee, Adam Hughes, Brian Stelfreeze--it's going to be great. Jae Lee, Joe Quesada, and Greg Capullo also did some really nice work on these books; these guys are going to be stars in the future, I'm sure.

There's also a fall mutant crossover series coming up that'll involve ***X-Men, X-Force,*** and ***X-Factor.*** This'll be a really big project, and I'm writing all those stories, so I'm really excited about that. You'll learn more about that later on this year, though.

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ARMAGEDDON INFERNO * GUNNER & SARGE & POOCH
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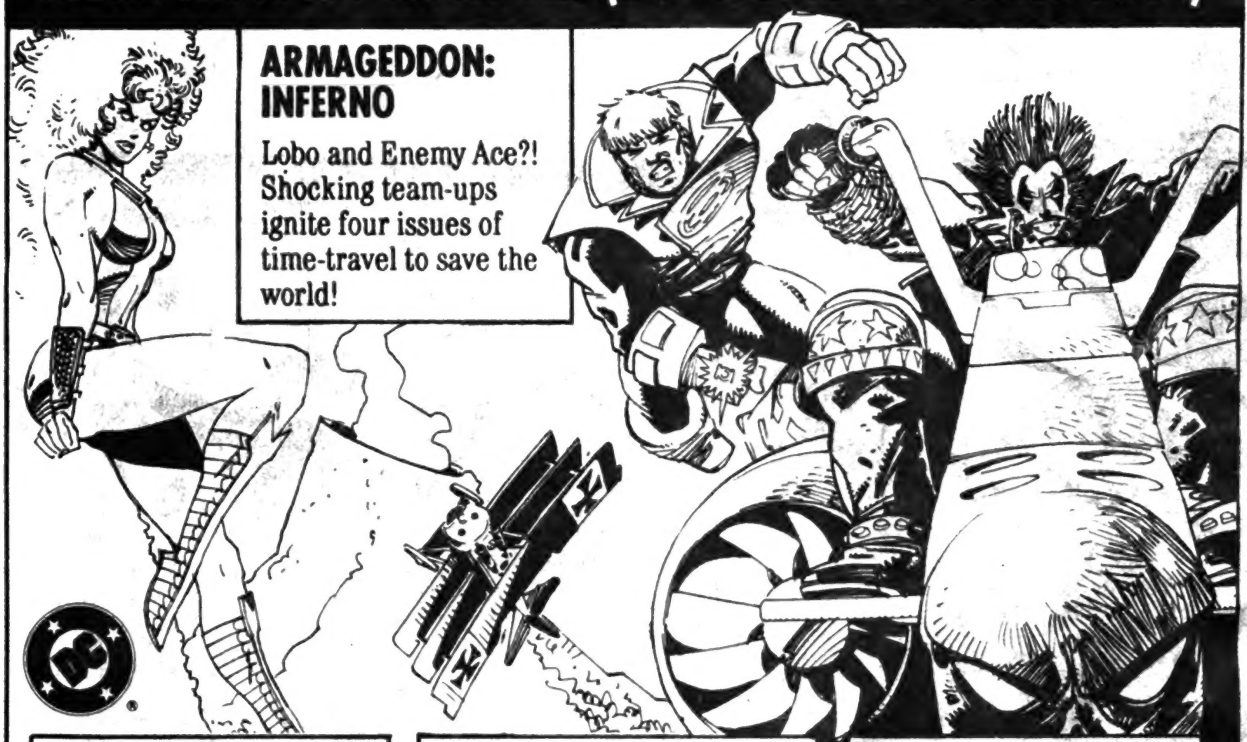

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